GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1229
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2007
TACKLING EARTHQUAKE DEVASTATION
Athawale Shri Ramdas

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has prepared/proposed any national policy for tackling the devastating effect of earthquakes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to protect the lives and property of the people living in the earthquake prone areas?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI V. RADHIKA SELVI)

(a) to (c): As per the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has laid down guidelines for the "Management of Earthquakes" in April 2007 with a view to reduce earthquake risk, and minimize the impact, loss of lives and damage to property caused by earthquakes. The guidelines prescribe measures for Central Ministries and Departments and State Governments to prepare disaster management plans having specific components on earthquake risk management. The measures are:

(i) Earthquake Resistant Construction of New Structures;
(ii) Selective Seismic Strengthening & Retrofitting of existing Priority Structures and Lifeline structures;
(iii) Regulation and Enforcement;
(iv) Awareness & Preparedness;
(v) Capacity Development (Education, Training, Research & Development, Capacity Building and Documentation);
(vi) Emergency Response.

(d): The Government have initiated the following measures to mitigate the impact of earthquakes:

(i) A National Programme for Capacity Building of Engineers and Architects in Earthquake Risk Management to ensure seismic safe construction by training of structural engineers and architects at reputed institutions is under implementation.

(ii) For improved response planning and for adoption of structural safety measures against the risk of earthquakes, and Urban Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction Project has been undertaken in 38 cities with a population of 0.5 million or more falling in seismic zones III to V.

(iii) Government has also sent advisories to State Government and Union Territory Administrations from time to time to take up various disaster mitigation and preparedness measures including measures relating to earthquake mitigation and preparedness by way of adoption of modern building bye-laws to ensure seismic resistant construction.

(iv) To inculcate a culture of safety, disaster management has been introduced in the school course curriculum. State Governments have also been advised to introduce the same in their respective course curriculum.

Besides these, The Disaster Management Act, 2005 has been enacted which stipulates preparation of State Disaster Management Plan by every State having regard to the specific guidelines laid down by the NDMA. The State Disaster Management Plan has to inter-alia, include the measures to be adopted for prevention and mitigation of disasters and the capacity-building and preparedness measures to be taken.